



March 8, 2024

Senator Bobby Joe Champion, Chair
Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee
3401 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Champion,

On behalf of Mi C.A.S.A MN, a Latino-led organization dedicated to empowering our community, we are writing to express our enthusiastic support for S.F. 3223 and the establishment of the Shakopee Area Workforce Development Scholarships Pilot for Scott County.

This initiative holds profound importance for the Latino community, particularly for individuals who have historically faced barriers to education and economic opportunity. Led by six women who are daughters of blue-collar immigrant workers and some first-generation college students, this initiative signifies a significant step towards inclusivity and empowerment.

This pilot program will help bridge the skills gap in Scott County while addressing the needs of our local job market. In addition, through the Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce and Shakopee Chamber Foundation's continued efforts to support underserved populations in our community, this program will alleviate barriers, including financial burdens associated with post-secondary education costs. Moreover, it will secure current and future career pathways for individuals to succeed.

Furthermore, the Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce and Shakopee Chamber Foundation are collaborating with area post-secondary institutions to bring tailored training programs into Scott County. This collaboration aims to eliminate transportation costs for underserved individuals, especially considering there is no post-secondary institution located directly within Scott County. This program will only help to allow these efforts to grow and succeed.

In conclusion, S.F. 3223 and the Shakopee Area Workforce Development Scholarships Pilot are crucial steps towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society. We urge your full support for this initiative and look forward to collaborating with the Shakopee Chamber of Commerce to make a positive difference in our community.

Thank you for considering our support for this important program.

Sincerely,

Mary Hernandez
Executive Director